

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
25 November 2004 (25.11.2004)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2004/101016 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A61L 31/04**

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/IB2004/050736

(22) International Filing Date: 18 May 2004 (18.05.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
2003/1344 19 May 2003 (19.05.2003) ZA

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **DE VIL-
LIERS, Milan** [ZA/ZA]; 5 Toulieiroord, Wapadrand,
0050 Pretoria (ZA).

(71) Applicant and

(72) Inventor: **DU PLESSIS, Tjaart Andries** [ZA/ZA]; 298
Stokkiesdraai, Erasmusrand, 0181 Pretoria (ZA).

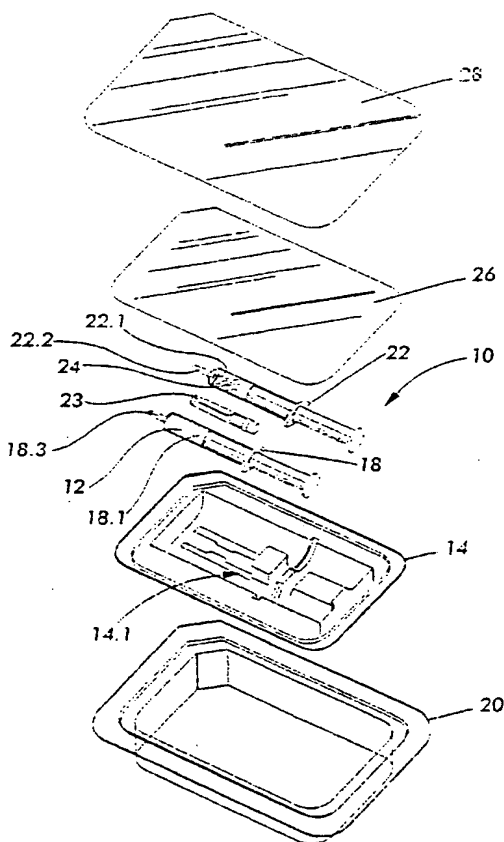
(74) Agent: **DM KISCH INC**; P O Box 781218, 2146 SAND-
TON (ZA).

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,
ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI,

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: PREPARATION OF AN OSTEOINDUCTIVE AGENT



(57) Abstract: This invention relates to a method for the prepara-
tion of an osteoinductive agent, the use of such an agent, and to a kit
for preparing such an agent. This invention further relates to the use
of the said kit in the preparation and dispensing of such an osteoin-
ductive agent in a method of reconstructive bone surgery. The kit
includes an osteoinductive agent comprising a modified naturally oc-
curring biocompatible biopolymer which was subjected, in the solid,
or dry state, to a source of ionising radiation in the presence of a me-
diating gas and annealed in the absence of oxygen at a temperature of
from 40°C to 120°C to render the product in a dry particulate form, the
product being disposed in a hermetically sealed container containing
oxygen-free gas.



SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

Published:

- with international search report
- before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

PREPARATION OF AN OSTEOINDUCTIVE AGENT

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a method for the preparation of an osteoinductive agent, the use of such an agent, and to a kit for preparing such an agent. This
5 invention further relates to the use of the said kit in the preparation and dispensing of such an osteoinductive agent in a method of reconstructive bone surgery.

10 It is known to use demineralised bone (DMB) in a biopolymer carrier such as hyaluronic acid (HA) or collagen, as an osteoinductive agent in reconstructive bone surgery. The biopolymer of some of these systems are chemically cross-linked and a first disadvantage of such osteoinductive systems is that they require both the DMB and the associated biopolymer carrier to be
15 prepared under aseptic conditions and dispensed from a customised hypodermic syringe to ensure the sterile presentation of the osteoinductive agent during the surgical procedure.

Further disadvantages of the known osteoinductive systems are that they are
20 prepared and stored in the form of a wet putty in modified hypodermic syringes and have to be radiation sterilised and kept at -40°C to prevent any biological or radiation breakdown of the systems. It is difficult to store and

handle osteoinductive systems at such low temperatures and the integrity of the systems could be jeopardised should the cold chain be broken.

In this specification, the term biopolymer includes within its scope a polymer
5 derived from a biological source, whether plant, microorganism or animal.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a method for the preparation of an osteoinductive agent, the use of such an agent, a kit for
10 preparing such an agent, and the use of the said kit in the preparation and dispensing of such an osteoinductive agent, with which the aforesaid disadvantages can be overcome or at least minimised.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a method for the preparation of an osteoinductive agent including the steps of:

- modifying a naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer by
subjecting the biopolymer in the solid, or dry state, to a source of
ionising radiation in the presence of a mediating gas; and
- 20 - annealing the resulting product in the absence of oxygen at a
temperature of from 40°C to 120°C to render the product in a dry
particulate form;
- thereafter removing any residual mediating gas; and

- disposing the product in a hermetically sealed container containing oxygen-free gas.

The naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer may be selected from the group consisting of collagen; hyaluronic acid; demineralised bone (DMB); and mixtures thereof.

The method may, in the case of the said mixtures, include the further steps of first subjecting the biocompatible biopolymers separately from each other to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of the said mediating gas; and thereafter mixing the irradiated biocompatible biopolymers.

Alternatively, the method may, in the case of the said mixtures, include the further steps of first mixing the biocompatible biopolymers; and thereafter subjecting the mixture to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of the said mediating gas.

The biocompatible biopolymer may be subjected to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 16 kGy.

20

The hermetically sealed container may be a secondary container and the method may include the further step of disposing the product inside a first

primary container, which is disposed within the hermetically sealed secondary container.

The method may include the further step of providing the first primary container
5 in the form of a syringe - type container, having a plunger for dispensing the contents thereof and an outlet opening having a diameter larger than 0.6 mm, to allow for the dispensing of the said product in a relatively viscous form.

The method may include the further step of filling the space in the first primary
10 container not occupied by the product with the said oxygen-free gas.

The method may include the further steps of providing a second primary container also in the form of a syringe - type container, disposing liquid in the second primary container, and disposing the second primary container in the
15 hermetically sealed secondary container.

The method may include the further step of providing the said liquid in the form of pyrogen-free water.

20 The method may include the further step of filling the secondary container with oxygen-free gas and capturing the oxygen-free gas inside the hermetically sealed secondary container.

The method may include the further step of disposing the hermetically sealed secondary container inside a hermetically sealed tertiary container.

5 The method may include the further step of filling the tertiary container with oxygen-free gas and capturing the oxygen-free gas inside the hermetically sealed tertiary container.

The method may include the further steps of subjecting the said containers and their contents, in kit form, to a terminal radiation sterilisation process.

10

Preferably, the sterilisation process includes the step of subjecting the containers and their contents to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 25 kGy.

15 The method may include the further step of opening the sealed containers and mixing the said liquid with the said product in a dry particulate form to hydrate the product to form an osteoinductive agent in the form of a pliable viscous putty.

20 The method may include the further step of dispensing the osteoinductive agent from the first primary container to a bone reconstruction site.

The method may include the further step of providing the oxygen-free gas in an inert form.

The method may include the further step of providing the said inert oxygen-free
5 gas in the form of nitrogen.

According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a kit for preparing and dispensing an osteoinductive agent including a modified naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer which was subjected, in the solid,
10 or dry state, to a source of ionising radiation in the presence of a mediating gas and annealed in the absence of oxygen at a temperature of from 40°C to 120°C to render the product in a dry particulate form, the product being disposed in a hermetically sealed container containing oxygen-free gas.

15 The naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer may be selected from the group consisting of collagen; hyaluronic acid; demineralised bone (DMB); and mixtures thereof.

In the case of the said mixture, the biocompatible biopolymers may be
20 subjected separately from each other in the presence of the said mediating gas to the said source of ionising radiation and thereafter be mixed.

Alternatively, in the case of the said mixture, the biocompatible biopolymers may first be mixed and thereafter be subjected to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of the said mediating gas.

- 5 The biocompatible biopolymers may be subjected to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 16 kGy.

The sealed container may be a secondary container and the product may be disposed inside a first primary container, which is disposed within the
10 hermetically sealed secondary container.

The first primary container may be in the form of a syringe - type container, having a plunger for dispensing the contents thereof and an outlet opening having a diameter larger than 0.6 mm, to allow for the dispensing of the product
15 in a relatively viscous form.

The space in the primary container not occupied by the product may be filled with the said oxygen-free gas.

- 20 The kit may include a second primary container containing a liquid and being disposed in the hermetically sealed secondary container.

The liquid may be in the form of pyrogen-free water.

The hermetically sealed secondary container may be disposed inside a hermetically sealed tertiary container.

- 5 The tertiary container may be filled with oxygen-free gas.

The secondary and tertiary containers may each be vacuum formed from a radiation stable, gas - impermeable material.

- 10 The secondary and tertiary containers may be closed by a closure comprising at least one layer of a radiation stable, gas - impermeable material.

Preferably the closure comprises a tri-laminate of an aluminium layer sandwiched between an internal layer of polyethylene and an outer layer of polyester.

15

Further according to the invention, the said containers are subjected, in kit form, to a terminal radiation sterilisation process at a minimum absorbed radiation dose from 10 to 80 kGy, preferably 25 kGy.

20

According to a third aspect of the invention there is provided an osteoinductive agent prepared in accordance with the method of the first aspect of the invention.

According to a fourth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of reconstructive bone surgery in humans or animals including the steps of:

- 5 - providing the kit in accordance with the second aspect of the invention;
- opening the secondary and tertiary containers;
- hydrating the said dry particulate product by injecting the sterile liquid into the first primary container and mixing the liquid and the product to form an osteoinductive putty;
- 10 - dispensing the putty into a bone reconstruction site from the first primary container; and
- closing the site to allow bone reconstruction to take place.

Further according to the invention the above steps take place under aseptical
15 conditions.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will now be described further by way of a non-limiting example
20 with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein :

- figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a kit in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention for use in the preparation and dispensing of an osteoinductive agent;
- 5 figure 2 is an assembled perspective view of the kit of figure 2;
- figure 3 is a plan view of a set of first primary containers, for use in kits similar to those of figure 1, containing a biocompatible biopolymer in dry or solid form and disposed in a hermetically sealed pouch containing a mediating gas, being subjected to a source of ionising radiation; and
- 10
- figure 4 is a side view, in use, of a first and second primary containers illustrating a step in the preparation of the said osteoinductive agent.
- 15

DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

Referring to figures 1 and 2, a kit according to a preferred embodiment of the invention for preparing an osteoinductive agent, is generally designated by

20 reference numeral 10.

The kit 10 includes a modified naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer which was subjected, in the solid, or dry state, to a source of ionising radiation

in the presence of a mediating gas and annealed in the absence of oxygen at a temperature of from 40°C to 120°C to render the product 12 in a dry particulate form, as discussed in more detail below. The product 12 is disposed in a first primary container 18 which, in turn, is disposed in a hermetically sealed secondary container 14 containing an inert oxygen-free gas in the form of nitrogen.

The first primary container 18 is in the form of a syringe - type container of a radiation stable polymer of the type known in the art of syringe manufacturing.

10 The container 18 is therefore provided with a plunger 18.1 for dispensing the contents thereof and an outlet opening 18.2, having a diameter larger than 0.6 mm, to allow for the dispensing of the product in a relatively viscous form. The opening 18.2 is covered with a removable cap 18.3 defining an opening (not shown) for allowing the passage of the mediating gas, as well as the said

15 nitrogen gas into and out of the first secondary container 18. A space 18.4 in the first primary container not occupied by the product 12 is thus filled with the nitrogen gas.

The kit 10 yet further includes a similar syringe - type second primary container

20 22 containing a liquid in the form of pyrogen-free water 24. The second primary container 22 is also disposed inside the hermetically sealed secondary container 14. The kit 10 also includes a blunt needle 23 which fits over an outlet 22.1 of the container 22, for fitting inside the outlet opening 18.2 of the first

primary container 18, in use, to inject the pyrogen-free water 24 into the space 18.4. The outlet spout is closed with a cap 22.2.

The kit 10 further includes a hermetically sealed tertiary container 20 also filled
5 with an inert oxygen-free gas in the form of nitrogen gas. The hermetically sealed secondary container 14 is disposed inside the tertiary container 20. The secondary and tertiary containers 14 and 20 are vacuum formed from a radiation stable, gas - impermeable material such as PET.

10 The secondary and tertiary containers 14 and 20 are each hermetically sealed by a peelable, radiation stable, gas – impermeable, tri-laminate cover 26 and 28 respectively. Each cover 26 and 28 comprises an aluminium layer sandwiched between an outer polyester layer and an inner polyethylene layer.

15 The secondary container 14 defines recesses 14.1 for receiving and releasably locating the two primary containers 18 and 22 and the needle 23.

In use, referring additionally to figure 3, in preparation of the kit 10, a plurality of first primary containers 18, containing the biocompatible biopolymer(s) (12) in
20 dry or solid form are disposed in a tray 30. The tray 30 and the biopolymer containing containers 18 are disposed inside a radiation stable, gas - impermeable pouch 32 and the pouch 32 hermetically sealed with a seal 34. Just prior to sealing, the air inside the pouch 32, including the air inside the

primary containers 18, is replaced with a mediating gas such as selected from the group consisting of acetylene, ethylene and propylene, to saturate the biopolymer with the mediating gas. The sealed pouch 32, whilst containing the biopolymer(s) (12), is subjected to a source of ionising radiation to obtain a
5 minimum absorbed dose of 16 kGy in the biopolymer(s) (12).

The source of ionising radiation is either a radioactive isotope such as ^{60}Co (γ -rays), or radiation generated by a high energy (250 keV to 10 MeV) electron accelerator, or X-rays generated by the accelerator, or any other suitable
10 device.

The minimum absorbed radiation dose may vary from 1 kGy to 50 kGy, depending on the structure of the biopolymer and whether a branched or long-chain nature of the product is desired, but is typically 16 kGy for the
15 biopolymers selected herein.

Following the irradiation step in the presence of the mediating gas (acetylene), and in order to remove any chemically reactive species produced by the radiation step, the irradiated biopolymer(s) (12) is/are subjected to heat
20 treatment (annealing) in the absence of oxygen to form the product 12 in the form of a cross-linked dry particulate biopolymer. The annealing takes place at elevated temperatures ranging from 40°C to 120°C depending on the heat stability of the particular biopolymer which is being modified. This annealing

step is ideally carried out in the presence of the acetylene or another unsaturated gaseous atmosphere or, alternatively, in the presence of an inert gas such as nitrogen or helium, or further alternatively in a vacuum oven. Annealing in the presence of acetylene could increase the formation of the new product 12, whilst annealing in vacuum or inert gas provides a suitable mechanism for the elimination of any chemically reactive free radicals formed during the process.

Following the annealing step, any residual gaseous mediating agent (acetylene) is removed from the product 12; the primary containers 18; and the pouch 32 by aerating the pouch 32, and if necessary, the application of a vacuum process to the product 12. This will depend on the retention ability of the product 12 for the gas, which depends on the porosity of the product 12.

Following the annealing step, the first primary container 18 containing the cross-linked product 12, is located in the secondary container 14. A desired amount of pyrogen – free water is disposed in the second primary container 22 and disposed in the secondary container 14 together with the needle 23. These steps take place in a nitrogen atmosphere to prevent the contact of oxygen with the product 12.

The secondary container 14 is then hermetically sealed with the cover 26 whilst capturing nitrogen gas inside the container 14. The secondary

container 14 is then inserted into the tertiary container 20, preferably in a nitrogen atmosphere and the tertiary container 20 hermetically sealed with the cover 28, also capturing nitrogen gas inside the tertiary container 20, to complete the kit 10. Thereafter, the entire kit 10 is radiation sterilised by
5 subjecting the kit 10 to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 25 kGy. The kit 10 can now be stored at ambient temperatures for a period of up to 5 years.

When an osteoinductive agent is to be prepared for use in reconstructive bone
10 surgery, the secondary and tertiary containers 14 and 20 are opened by peeling open the covers 28 and 28 respectively. The caps 18.3 and 22.2 are removed from the secondary containers 18 and 22 and the needle 23 placed on the outlet 22.3 of the second primary container 22. The needle 23 is inserted into the opening 18.2 and pyrogen-free water 24 injected into the space 18.4
15 and mixed with the product 12. The product 12 is thus hydrated to form an osteoinductive agent in putty form. The putty is manually dispensed into a bone reconstruction site (not shown) in a human or animal body and the site closed to allow bone reconstruction to take place. It will be appreciated that these steps have to take place under aseptic conditions.

20

The naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer is selected from the group consisting of collagen; hyaluronic acid; demineralised bone (DMB); and mixtures thereof. In the case of the said mixture, in preparation of the kit 10, the

biocompatible biopolymers are subjected separately from each other in the presence of the said mediating gas to the said source of ionising radiation and thereafter mixed. Alternatively, in the case of the said mixture, the biocompatible biopolymers are first mixed and thereafter subjected to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of the said mediating gas.

For example, the dry DMB and collagen are pre-mixed in the required ratio (40:60) and placed in the primary container 18. This dry mixture of the DMB and the collagen is then subsequently radiation cross-linked as herein described at the optimum minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 16 kGy, which is the same for both biopolymers.

It was found that the radiation cross-linking of collagen or hyaluronic acid in the dry form in the presence of a mediating gas results in a carrier for DMB that does not show the undesirable physiological side effects observed with prior art chemically cross-linked alternatives.

In carrying out the method for the preparation of the osteoinductive product 12, the biopolymer must be in the solid state, i.e. dry, in an atmosphere comprising a mediating agent, preferably a low molecular weight unsaturated alkenic or alkynic gas such as ethylene, propylene or acetylene. Acetylene is preferable. Before introducing the mediating gas to the space 18.4, the space must be flushed or evacuated to remove any oxygen therefrom. All the mediating gas is

removed after completion of the radiation cross-linking process and therefore, the resulting product should not contain any of the mediating gas.

It was found that radiation cross-linking of DMB results in a 350% increase in the osteoinductive capacity of the DMB and the associated strength of the new bone. It was further found that the radiation cross-linking of collagen or hyaluronic acid results in a thousand fold increase in the molecular mass of the modified collagen and hyaluronic acid, thus rendering these modified biopolymers as excellent carriers for the DMB.

10

This method of preparing the crosslinked osteoinductive agent in accordance with the invention has *inter alia* the following advantages:

– The dry osteoinductive product 12 will have an elongated shelf life relatively much longer than the prior art systems, as the product 12 is stored in dry form under oxygen-free gas and the hydrated osteoinductive putty is prepared freshly directly before use in theatre. The current need for cold storage of such osteoinductive agents is thus obviated.

20

– Because of the blanketing of the product 12 and the other components of the kit 10 with nitrogen gas prior to the radiation sterilisation and storage, virtually no radiation-induced oxidative

degradation of the dry product 12, the containers 18 and 22, and the packaging of the secondary container 14 takes place. This results in the enhanced packaging integrity and ensuing shelf - life of the product 12. The latter estimated to be at least five years at ambient
5 temperatures.

- The method of the present invention further subjects the product 12 and the pyrogen - free water 24 to a terminal radiation sterilisation process and the associated very high degree of sterility assurance
10 and safety to the patient.

It will be appreciated that variations in detail are possible with the use and preparation of an osteoinductive agent, with an osteoinductive kit including
15 such agent and with the use of the said kit in the dispensing of such an osteoinductive agent, according to the invention without departing from the scope of the appended claims.

CLAIMS

1. A method for the preparation of an osteoinductive agent including the steps of modifying a naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer by
5 subjecting the biopolymer in the solid, or dry state, to a source of ionising radiation in the presence of a mediating gas and annealing the resulting product in the absence of oxygen at a temperature of from 40°C to 120°C to render the product in a dry particulate form; thereafter removing any residual mediating gas; and disposing the product in a
10 hermetically sealed container containing oxygen-free gas.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer is selected from the group consisting of collagen; hyaluronic acid; demineralised bone (DMB); and mixtures
15 thereof.
3. A method according to claim 2 wherein, in the case of the said mixture, the method includes the steps of first subjecting the biocompatible biopolymers to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of
20 the said mediating gas separately from each other; and thereafter mixing the irradiated biocompatible biopolymers.

4. A method according to claim 2 wherein, in the case of the said mixtures, the method includes the steps of first mixing the biocompatible biopolymers; and thereafter subjecting the mixture to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of the said mediating gas.

5

5. A method according to claim 3 or 4 wherein the biocompatible biopolymers are subjected to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 16 kGy.

10

6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the hermetically sealed container is a secondary container and wherein the method includes the further step of disposing the product inside a first primary container, which is disposed inside the hermetically sealed secondary container.

15

7. A method according to claim 6 including the further step of providing the first primary container in the form of a syringe - type container, having a plunger for dispensing the contents thereof, and an outlet opening having a diameter larger than 0.6 mm, to allow for the dispensing of the said product in a relatively viscous form.

20

8. A method according to claim 6 or claim 7 including the further step of filling the space in the first primary container not occupied by the product with the said oxygen-free gas.
- 5 9. A method according to any one of claims 6 to 8 which includes the further steps of providing a second primary container; disposing liquid in the second primary container; and disposing the second primary container inside the hermetically sealed secondary container.
- 10 10. A method according to claim 9 including the further step of providing the said liquid in the form of pyrogen-free water.
11. A method according to claim 9 or 10 which includes the further step of disposing the hermetically sealed secondary container inside a
15 hermetically sealed tertiary container.
12. A method according to claim 11 including the further step of filling the tertiary container with oxygen-free gas and capturing the oxygen-free gas inside the hermetically sealed tertiary container.
- 20 13. A method according to claim 11 or 12 wherein the steps of providing the secondary and tertiary containers include the step of vacuum forming these containers from a radiation stabilised, gas - impermeable material.

14. A method according to any one of claims 9 to 13 including the further steps of subjecting the said containers and their contents, in kit form, to a terminal radiation sterilisation process.
- 5
15. A method according to claim 14 wherein the sterilisation process includes the step of subjecting the containers and their contents to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 25 kGy.
- 10 16. A method according to claim 14 or 15 which includes the further step of opening the sealed containers and mixing the said sterile liquid with the said product in a dry particulate form to hydrate the product to form an osteoinductive agent in the form of a pliable viscous putty.
- 15 17. A method according to claim 16 which includes the further step of dispensing the osteoinductive agent from the first primary container to a bone reconstruction site.
- 20 18. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including the step of providing the oxygen-free gas in an inert form.
19. A method according to claim 18 including the further step of providing the said gas in the form of nitrogen.

20. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the said mediating gas is selected from the group consisting of acetylene, ethylene and propylene.
- 5
21. A kit for preparing and dispensing an osteoinductive agent including a modified naturally occurring biocompatible biopolymer which was subjected, in the solid, or dry state, to a source of ionising radiation in the presence of a mediating gas and annealed in the absence of oxygen
- 10 at a temperature of from 40°C to 120°C to render the product in a dry particulate form, the product being disposed in a hermetically sealed container containing oxygen-free gas.
22. A kit according to claim 21 wherein the naturally occurring biocompatible
- 15 biopolymer is selected from the group consisting of collagen; hyaluronic acid; demineralised bone (DMB); and mixtures thereof.
23. A kit according to claim 22 wherein, in the case of the said mixture, the biocompatible biopolymers are subjected in the presence of the said
- 20 mediating gas to the said source of ionising radiation separately from each other and thereafter mixed.

24. A kit according to claim 22 wherein, in the case of the said mixture, the biocompatible biopolymers are first mixed and thereafter subjected to the said source of ionising radiation in the presence of the said mediating gas.

5

25. A kit according to claim 23 or 24 wherein the biocompatible biopolymers are subjected to a minimum absorbed irradiation dose of 16 kGy.

10

26. A kit according to any one of claims 21 to 25 wherein the sealed container is a secondary container and wherein the product is disposed inside a first primary container, which is disposed inside the sealed secondary container.

15

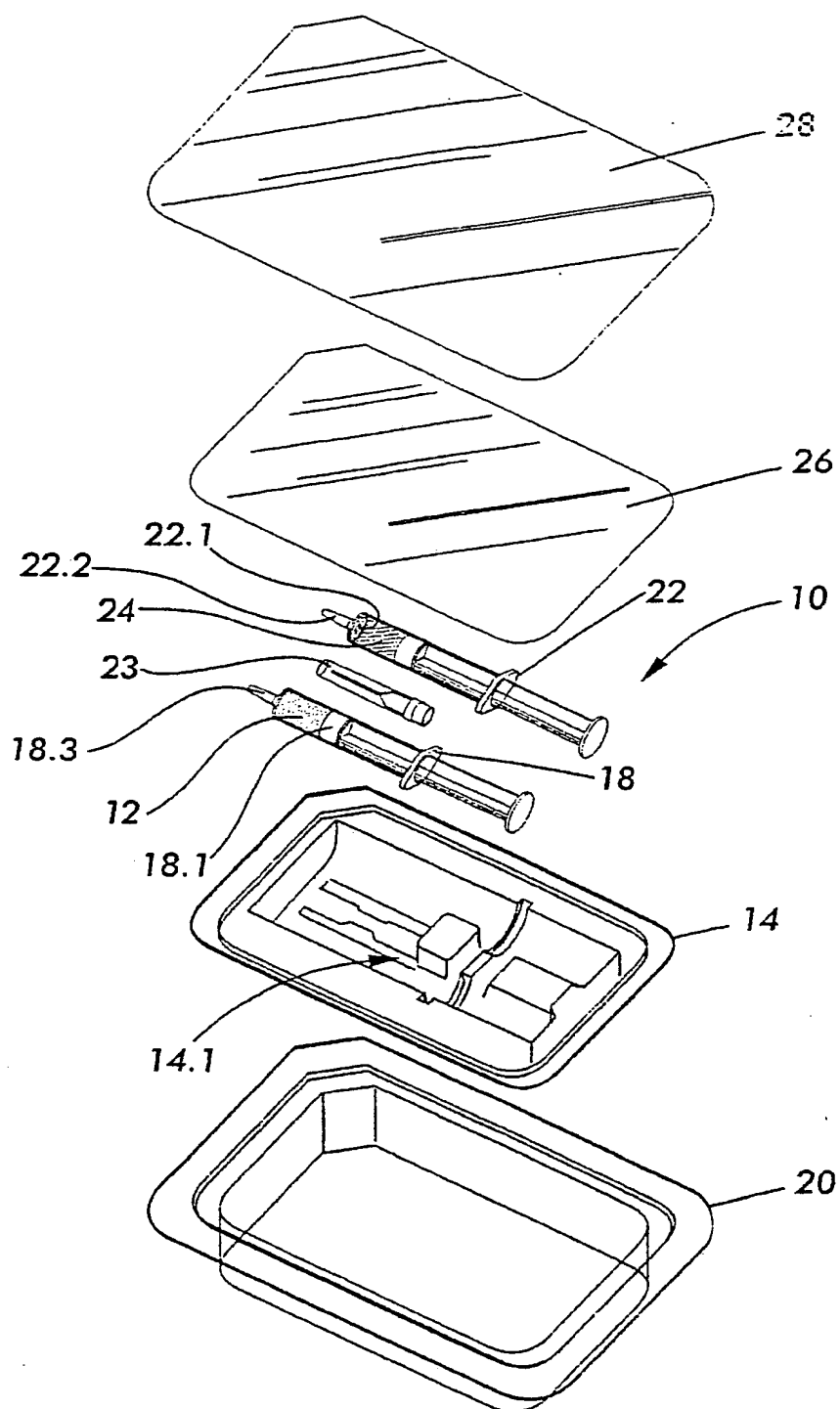
27. A kit according to claim 26 wherein the first primary container is in the form of a syringe - type container, having a plunger for dispensing the contents thereof and an outlet opening having a diameter larger than 0.6 mm, to allow for the dispensing of the product in a relatively viscous form.

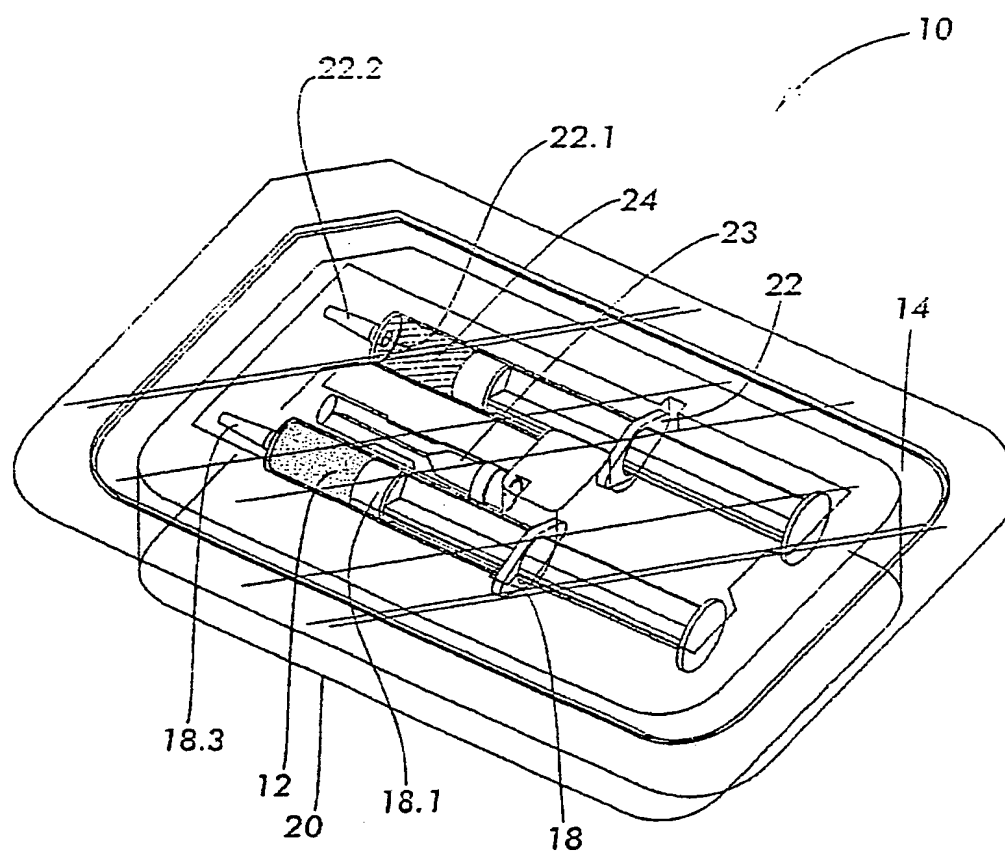
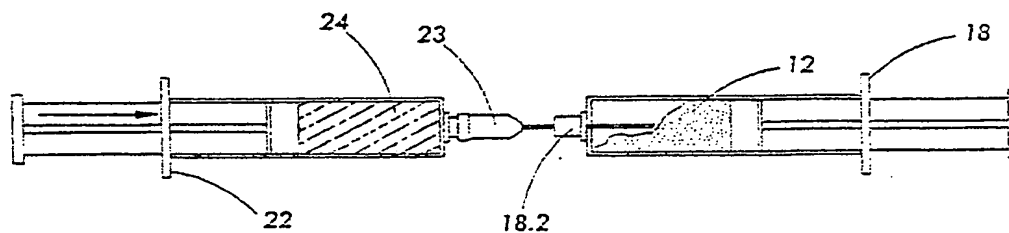
20

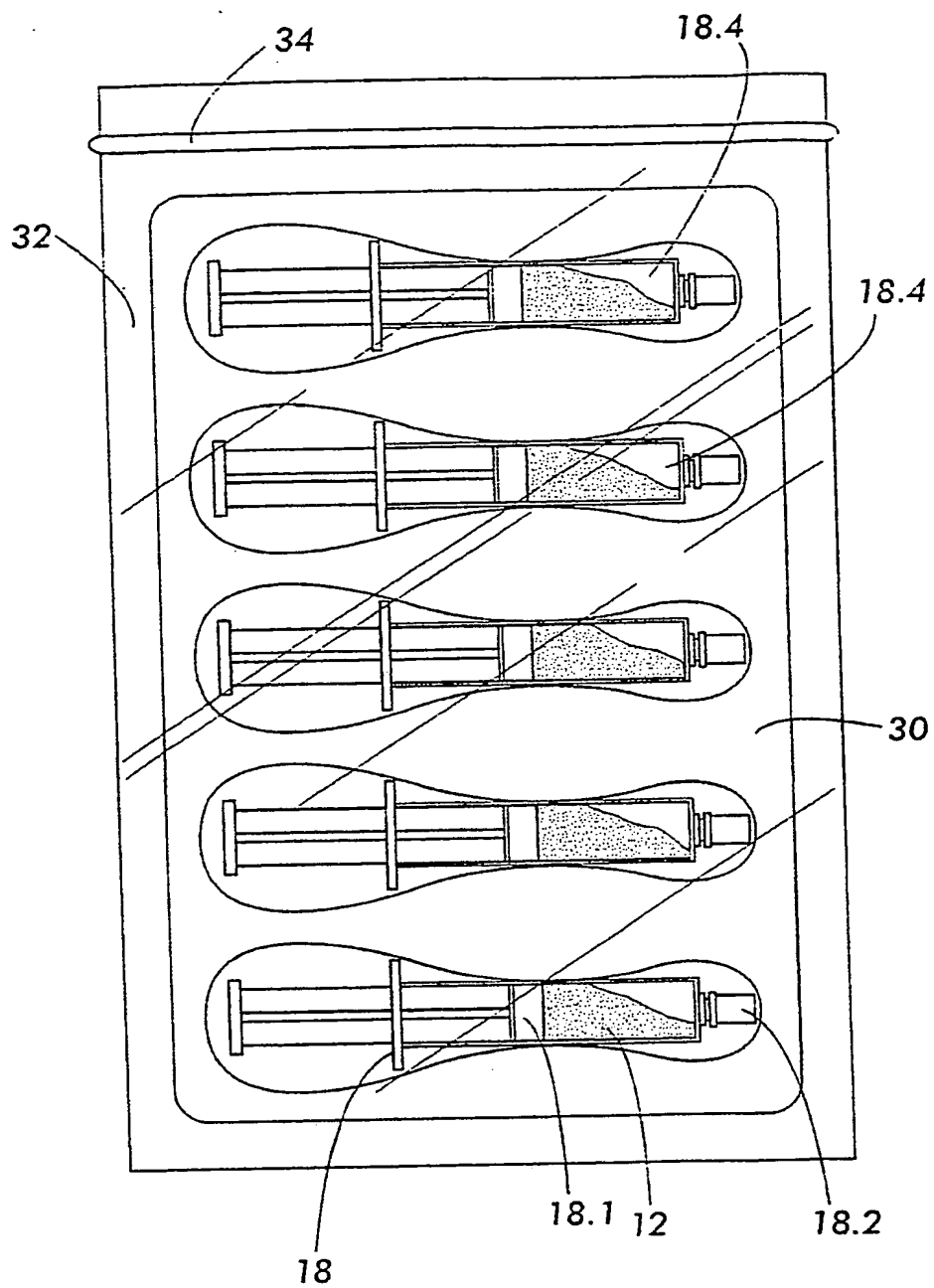
28. A kit according to claim 26 or 27 wherein the space in the primary container not occupied by the product is filled with the said oxygen-free gas.

29. A kit according to any one of claims 26 to 28 which includes a second primary container containing a liquid and being disposed inside the hermetically sealed secondary container.
- 5 30. A kit according to claim 29 wherein the liquid is in the form of pyrogen-free water.
31. A kit according to claim 29 or 30 wherein the hermetically sealed secondary container is disposed inside a hermetically sealed tertiary container.
- 10 32. A kit according to claim 31 wherein the tertiary container is filled with oxygen-free gas.
- 15 33. A kit according to claim 32 wherein the secondary and tertiary containers are vacuum formed from a radiation stable, gas - impermeable material.
34. A kit according to any one of claims 29 to 33 wherein the said containers are subjected, in kit form, to a terminal radiation sterilisation process.
- 20 35. A kit according to any one of claims 21 to 34 wherein the oxygen-free gas is inert.

36. A kit according to claim 35 wherein the gas is nitrogen.
37. A kit according to any one of claims 21 to 36 wherein the said mediating
5 gas is selected from the group consisting of acetylene, ethylene and propylene.
38. A method of reconstructive bone surgery in humans or animals including
the steps of providing the kit in according to claim 34; opening the
10 secondary and tertiary containers; hydrating the dry particulate product by injecting the sterile liquid into the first primary container and mixing the liquid and the product to form a putty; dispensing the putty into a bone reconstruction site; and closing the site to allow bone reconstruction to take place.
- 15
39. An osteoinductive agent prepared in accordance with any one of claims 1 to 20.
40. A method for the preparation of an osteoinductive agent substantially as
20 herein described with reference to the accompanying drawings.
41. A kit for preparing and dispensing an osteoinductive agent substantially as herein described and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

**FIGURE 1**

**FIGURE 2****FIGURE 4**

**FIGURE 3**

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.
PCT/IB2004/050736

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 A61L31/04

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 A61L C08K A61M

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the International search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EP0-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2002/107299 A1 (SUN DEH-CHUAN ET AL) 8 August 2002 (2002-08-08)	1,6, 17-19, 21,26, 28,35, 36,38-41
Y	page 1, paragraphs 3,4,8-10 page 2, paragraph 16-21 page 3, paragraphs 22,24-27,29 page 4, paragraph 30	1-41
Y	EP 1 270 660 A (BMG INC) 2 January 2003 (2003-01-02) column 4, lines 44-47,57 column 5, lines 23-25,36-40,51-53 column 6, lines 16-19,34,35,46-50 claims; example 3	1-41

-/--

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the International filing date
- *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- *P* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- *T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- *X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- *S* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

24 August 2004

Date of mailing of the international search report

13/09/2004

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Böhm, I

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/IB2004/050736

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	DE 26 20 773 A (KARAKASHIAN NUBAR A) 1 December 1977 (1977-12-01) figure 2	21-37
A	EP 0 739 638 A (EIKEN CHEMICAL) 30 October 1996 (1996-10-30) column 3, lines 9-36	1-41
A	US 4 232 670 A (RICHTER KARL M ET AL) 11 November 1980 (1980-11-11) claim 1	39-41
A	WO 01/41666 A (COHESION TECHNOLOGIES INC) 14 June 2001 (2001-06-14) claims; figure 3	21-37

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/IB2004/050736

Box II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☒ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
Although claims 17 and 38 are directed to a method of treatment of the human/animal body, the search has been carried out and based on the alleged effects of the compound/composition.
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/IB2004/050736

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2002107299 A1	08-08-2002	US 6372814 B1	16-04-2002
		US 6174934 B1	16-01-2001
		US 5728748 A	17-03-1998
		US 5650485 A	22-07-1997
		US 5449745 A	12-09-1995
		US 5414049 A	09-05-1995
		US 2003207957 A1	06-11-2003
		AT 171078 T	15-10-1998
		AT 196095 T	15-09-2000
		AU 684500 B2	18-12-1997
		AU 6436494 A	20-12-1994
		CA 2162927 C	04-07-2000
		DE 9490446 U1	20-02-1997
		DE 69413395 D1	22-10-1998
		DE 69413395 T2	04-02-1999
		DE 69425838 D1	12-10-2000
		DE 69425838 T2	12-04-2001
		EP 1005872 A1	07-06-2000
		EP 0701453 A1	20-03-1996
		EP 0847765 A1	17-06-1998
		ES 2122260 T3	16-12-1998
		WO 9427651 A1	08-12-1994
		JP 2836965 B2	14-12-1998
		JP 8509148 T	01-10-1996
		US 5543471 A	06-08-1996
EP 1270660 A	02-01-2003	JP 2003000695 A	07-01-2003
		EP 1270660 A1	02-01-2003
		US 2002197296 A1	26-12-2002
		US 2003091646 A1	15-05-2003
DE 2620773 A	01-12-1977	CA 1087055 A1	07-10-1980
		GB 1534175 A	29-11-1978
		US 3937219 A	10-02-1976
		DE 2620773 A1	01-12-1977
EP 0739638 A	30-10-1996	JP 8057050 A	05-03-1996
		EP 0739638 A1	30-10-1996
		CA 2174508 A1	29-02-1996
		CN 1134117 A	23-10-1996
		WO 9605877 A1	29-02-1996
US 4232670 A	11-11-1980	DE 7819584 U1	12-10-1978
		AT 750 T	15-04-1982
		CA 1089819 A1	18-11-1980
		DE 2962273 D1	15-04-1982
		EP 0006430 A2	09-01-1980
		JP 58162812 U	29-10-1983
		JP 55008798 A	22-01-1980
WO 0141666 A	14-06-2001	AU 1946101 A	18-06-2001
		EP 1237492 A1	11-09-2002
		WO 0141666 A1	14-06-2001